

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, UK

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: PAN AM'S PROPOSED CHANGE OF GAUGE
IN LONDON

REF: PARIS 8361

1. PAN AM HAS INFORMED DEPARTMENT THAT FRENCH DGCA
ON MARCH 13 SENT LETTER TO LOCAL PAN AM REP
DISAPPROVING AIRLINE'S PROPOSED CHANGE OF GAUGE AT
LONDON IN CONNECTION WITH US-LONDON-PARIS FLIGHT
PROPOSED BY PAN AM FOR EFFECTIVENESS APRIL 1.
LETTER STATES THAT CHANGE OF GAUGE IS IN VIOLATION OF
BILATERAL AGREEMENT.

2. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO DISCUSS ISSUE WITH DGCA
OFFICIALS, MAKING FOLLOWING POINTS:

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PAGE 02 STATE 068320

A. US REGARDS THAT CHANGE OF GAUGE IS AN INTRINSIC
RIGHT. SECTION VI OF ANNEX TO AGREEMENT, AS AMPLIFIED
BY SECTION II OF AUGUST 5, 1959 AGREED MINUTES, ADDRESSES
QUESTION OF HOW CHANGE OF GAUGE MAY BE CONDUCTED IN
TERRITORY OF OTHER PARTY. THESE PROVISIONS ARE
SILENT WITH REGARD TO CHANGE OF GAUGE IN THIRD

COUNTRIES BECAUSE IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN CONSIDERED NECESSARY TO DEAL WITH QUESTION ONLY WITH RESPECT TO HOW CHANGE OF GAUGE MAY BE CONDUCTED IN THE TERRITORY OF THE OTHER PARTY. MANNER IN WHICH CHANGE OF GAUGE TAKES PLACE IN A THIRD COUNTRY IS ONE TO BE RESOLVED BETWEEN FIRST COUNTRY (IN THIS CASE US) AND THIRD COUNTRY (IN THIS CASE UK).

B. FRENCH AUTHORITIES HAVE THEMSELVES NOT OBJECTED IN PAST TO US AIRLINES CHANGE OF GAUGE IN THIRD COUNTRIES. FOR EXAMPLE, PAN AM HAS BEEN CHANGING GAUGE AT ROME ON ITS NEW YORK-PARIS-ROME-BEYOND FLIGHT DURING FOLLOWING PERIODS: 10/58-4/60, 4/70-5/70, 10/70-6/71, 10/71-6/72, 10/72-10/73.

C. IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE TO CREATE A PROBLEM ON THE SPECIFIC PAN AM OPERATION AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME. US WAS ON VERGE OF ACCEPTING FRENCH PROPOSAL TO ALLOW AIR FRANCE A WASHINGTON-MEXICO CITY BLIND SECTOR (FOR CONCORDE) IN RETURN FOR CONTINUATION TWA'S GENEVA-NICE BLIND SECTOR, DESPITE FACT THAT FORMER IS MORE VALUABLE THAN LATTER. US HOPES THEREFORE THAT FRENCH WILL REMOVE THEIR OBJECTION TO PAN AM'S CHANGE OF GAUGE. VANCE

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